

SUBJECT: Planning for Potential Poultry Shortages

Major agencies in the United States are collaborating on ensuring the detection, prevention and control of the strain of Avian Influenza (AI) (H5N1). AI H5N1 is a virus that is highly contagious among wild birds and often fatal to domesticated birds and poultry. The Secretary of Agriculture recently was quoted:

“THE DEPARTMENT OF AGRICUTURE IS WORKING ON MANY FRONTS, WITH MANY PARTNERS TO FURTHER STRENGTHEN OUR ABILITY TO DETECT AND RESPOND TO HIGHLY PATHOGENIC STRAINS OF AVIAN INFLUENZA,” said Secretary Mike Johanns. “BY INTENSIFYING OUR MONITORING OF MIGRATORY BIRD POPULATIONS, WE INCREASE THE LIKELIHOOD OF EARLY DETECTION, WHICH IS KEY TO CONTROLLING THE SPREAD OF THE VIRUS, PARTICULARLY IN OUR DOMESTIC POULTRY. HAVING SAID THAT, IT’S IMPORTANT FOR THE PUBLIC TO KNOW TWO THING: A DETECTION OF ASIAN H5N1 IN THE UNITED STATES WOULD NOT SIGNAL THE START OF A HUMAN PANDEMIC; AND PROPERLY PREARED POULTRY IS SAFE TO EAT, BECAUSE PROPER COOKLING KILLS THIS VIRUS.”

For the United States and Canada, it is probably a matter of time before the disease is detected in these locations. In the event that AI(H5N1) achieves a foothold in the US poultry industry, the subsequent controls and reduction of flocks **could** affect the availability of both poultry meat and eggs in the supply chain.

Installation food program managers should instruct food service operators to review published guidance, develop back up menus in collaboration with their installation dietitians, and coordinate contingency plans with their prime vendors. Adherence to the Army Menu Standards, found in Operating Procedures for the Army Food Program, DA Pam 30-22, section 3-70, is still required if menus are revised.

Recommend that Installation Food Program Managers routinely assess these websites for updated information on Avian Influenza.

References

World Health Organization http://www.who.int/csr/disease/avian_influenza
United States Department of Agriculture <http://www.aphis.usda.gov/vs>
US Department of the Interior <http://www.doi.gov>
US Department of Health and Human Services <http://www.pandemicflu.gov>

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